



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

RICK PERRY
GOVERNOR

March 12, 2010

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
108 Federal Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20502

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

In both your roles as Governor of Arizona and Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), you have experienced the challenges associated with drug and human smuggling along the U.S.-Mexico border, as well as the violence associated with Mexican crime cartels and transnational gangs conducting operations in the United States and Mexico. To meet the challenge of protecting our communities in Texas, we have continued to commit state funding, personnel and resources to augment the efforts of the brave men and women of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). In order for our CBP partners to effectively secure the border, they must be adequately staffed and able to take full advantage of available and emerging technologies to combat an enemy that is constantly evolving and developing new methods of evasion.

In 2004, CBP initiated a program designed to integrate the use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) into its strategy to secure our country's borders. Since then, Congress has provided DHS with more than \$50 million in necessary funding to purchase, test and deploy these aircraft. The CBP Office of Air and Marine (OAM) currently operates six of the MQ-9 Predator B UASs. Two have been deployed to North Dakota for operations along the northern border, and three have been deployed to the southwest border. Unfortunately, all three of the aircraft assigned to the southwest border are based in Arizona and operating exclusively there.

OAM is scheduled to receive its seventh Predator B this summer. I am requesting that this system be based in Texas and used to support local, state and federal law enforcement in operations along the international border from Brownsville to El Paso.

These remotely piloted Predator B UASs have the capability to conduct high-quality surveillance of vulnerable or otherwise inaccessible areas. This capability is a proven force multiplier in the

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
March 12, 2010
Page 2

war against drug and human smuggling. Assigning the MQ-9 Predator UAS to the Texas-Mexico border will greatly increase the effectiveness of law enforcement personnel on the ground.

The State of Texas shares 1,254 miles of border with Mexico, comprising roughly 65 percent of the entire U.S.-Mexico international boundary. In the same way the federal government takes seriously its responsibility to secure that international border, the State of Texas recognizes its obligation to protect the lives of its citizens. This is a time of increasing and devastating instability in the communities on the other side of the Rio Grande. Ciudad Juarez, just across the river from El Paso, continues to hold the world's highest murder rate, and over the past few weeks, northern Mexico has seen an escalation of violence, with several gun battles between feuding drug cartels and the Mexican military in the border towns of Nuevo Laredo and Reynosa.

It is imperative that the law enforcement personnel on the ground be equipped with the best technology and intelligence available. In the interest of not only border security but homeland security, I respectfully urge you to approve the placement of the newest MQ-9 Predator B UAS along the border in Texas, and secure the Federal Aviation Administration approvals necessary to operate in the national airspace. If my office can be of any assistance in this process, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Perry". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Rick Perry
Governor

RP:jhp

cc: Texas Congressional Delegation